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INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY.*

Alfred Cave is known to the theological world as the author of "The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice," and is a student of German theology as well as translator of several important works from that language. This is a new and original volume from his pen, covering a wide field, and hence rather broad than deep. It aims to serve as an introduction to theology. It claims rather to summarize than to discover. The subject of theology is analyzed into six parts as Natural, Ethnic, Biblical, Ecclesiastical, Comparative, Pastoral. Each part is treated under similar rubrics, such as Definition, Utility, History, Division, Outline, Books Recommended. The last feature is excellent. The lists of books are quite full, up to date, and a brief summary or criticism is made of those most important, so that the young student of theology need not err in laying out his course of reading. The author's method of discussing biblical theology will give a fair idea of the stand-point and usefulness of the work. Biblical theology is defined to be "the science—or more accurately the group of sciences—concerned with the facts presented by the Bible." It is wider than the science of the doctrinal declarations of the Scriptures, for which the term biblical dogmatics is used. The term Exegetical Theology is rejected as inexact. The problem of biblical theology is "to investigate and to appropriate the contents of the Bible by treating it at the outset just as other literary relics of the buried past are treated." "When the entire contents of the Bible have been ascertained, classified and arranged in due order in one science, which is a collection of several sciences, biblical theology has reached its goal." Under biblical theology are treated *first*, as introductory to exegesis, biblical canonicity, biblical textual criticism, biblical philology, biblical hermeneutics, biblical introduction in general. Then *second*, comes biblical exegesis itself. The *third* head is biblical exegesis applied, under which are arranged biblical archaeology, history, literary criticism, dogmatics, ethics, psychology and sociology.

Two hundred out of the six hundred pages are devoted to biblical theology, and the treatment seems fresh and thorough. The author is doubtless right in thinking that to several classes of readers this book might be a saving of labor. It demands and deserves study. No student of this broad and goodly domain of theology could help receiving clearer and wider views of the great field and a resulting balance of mind which the author wisely calls "inestimable." Of course not all his conclusions will be acceptable to all minds. But a mastery of the plan and scope of the volume would be a liberal education for some clergymen, and might inspire them to go beyond "Introduction" to a deeper and fuller acquaintance and friendship with the length and breadth of christian theology. Their sermons would profit, and their hearers would be built up systematically in the truth of God. Mr. Spurgeon wisely says to his students, "Brethren, if you are not theologians, you are in your pastorates, just nothing at all. Verbiage is often the fig-leaf which does duty as a covering for theological ignorance. Unless we are instructive preachers and really feed the people, we may be great quoters of elegant poetry, and mighty retailers of second-hand wind-bags, but we shall be like Nero of old, fiddling while Rome was burning, and sending vessels to Alexandria to fetch sand for the arena, while the populace starved for want of corn."

* AN INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY: its principles, its branches, its results, and its literature. By Alfred Cave, B. A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1886. New York: Scribner & Welford.